

EXHIBIT 2
DATE 2/9/07
HB 511

**CHIPPEWA CREE TRIBE OF THE ROCKY BOY'S
RESERVATION**

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL NO. 511
INTRODUCED BY HOUSE REPRESENTATIVE JONATHAN
WINDY BOY:**

**"AN ACT AUTHORIZING THE ISSUANCE OF COAL
SEVERANCE TAX BONDS FOR THE STATE SHARE OF
CONSTRUCTION EXPENSES OF REGIONAL WATER
PROJECTS; AUTHORIZING THE CREATION OF STATE
DEBT; AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE."**

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED BY:
BRUCE SUNCHILD**

**PRESENTED TO:
HONORABLE JOHN SINRUD, CHAIRMAN
HONORABLE EVE FRANKLIN, VICE-CHAIR
HONORABLE JANNA TAYLOR, VICE-CHAIR
HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 9, 2007
STATE CAPITOL ROOM 102
HELENA, MONTANA**

INTRODUCTION

Good Afternoon, Honorable Chairman Sinrud, Vice-Chairs Franklin and Taylor and Members of the Committee. My name is Bruce Sunchild, Sr., and I had served as the former Vice-Chairman of my Tribe and long time supporter of bringing clean drinking water to both to our reservation and to the communities in North Central Montana.

The Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's Reservation respectfully submits this testimony in support of House Bill No. 511: "An Act Authorizing the Issuance of Coal Severance Tax Bonds for the State Share of Construction Expenses of Regional Water Projects; Authorizing the Creation of State Debt; and Providing an Effective Date." The bill is sponsored by our House Representative Jonathan Windy Boy and will provide critically needed construction funding for the state's share of our regional water projects in Montana.

The Chippewa Cree Tribe in partnership with the North Central Regional Water Authority is constructing the Rocky

Boy's/North Central Montana Regional Water System which was authorized by Congress in 2002. The regional water project is a historic endeavor between the Tribe, the State and Federal Governments and our most importantly neighboring communities. We have all come together because of our mutual need for quality drinking water in our respective communities. We have stuck together through good and bad times and have become good friends as well as project partners. Over ten years ago, we formed a joint steering committee between the Tribe and Regional Water Authority and we meet monthly to jointly coordinate the direction of the project. We work very closely with the State Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) and the State Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) as well with the Bureau of Reclamation (BOR), Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to help us build a regional water system to ensure a safe and adequate rural, municipal and industrial water supply for the residents of the

reservation and the North Central Montana communities involved with the project.

The legislation being considered today will provide a means for the non-tribal participants in our regional water project to acquire construction funding for the State share of our core pipeline. When Congress authorized the regional water project in 2002 it required a cost share between the federal and state governments for the construction of the core pipeline. This bill you are considering today is the funding vehicle for the state share of construction costs. H.B. 511 requires the proceeds of the coal severance tax bonds must be used to finance the state share of expenses related to the construction, expansion or improvement of regional water systems. We urge you to approve this bill since it provides the non-tribal participants in our water project a viable opportunity to acquire construction funding for their share of the core pipeline.

Since this project was authorized in 2002, the Tribe and Water Authority have worked closely with DNRC and the Bureau

of Reclamation in submitting Federal appropriation requests through our congressional delegation for the planning, design and construction of the water system. We have been successful in securing some construction funding through those Federal appropriations, however the funds are trickling in due to other priorities in Congress. The competition for Federal appropriations to construct regional water projects is very high since all states are vying for the same pot of money at the Bureau of Reclamation. With the continued support of our communities, the State of Montana, the Tribe and the State and Federal agencies involved, we have broken ground last summer and were successful in completing the first phase of construction at Tiber Dam. Our next phase is to design and construct the water treatment plant located at Tiber Dam. Access to construction funding such as what H.B. 511 contemplates is critical to our project to complement what we are able to acquire through our Federal appropriations.

Mr. Chairman and Honorable members of this Committee, we realize and value the opportunity here to receive financial

assistance from the State with our regional water projects in Montana and firmly believe that if we keep working together as we have then the common bond that brought us all together, that is, for clean drinking water for our respective communities in Montana will become a reality. On behalf of the Chippewa Cree Tribe of the Rocky Boy's reservation, I urge you to approve House Bill 511. I also would like to thank the Honorable Chairman and members of the Committee for allowing us to testify today in support of H.B. 511 and to personally thank Representative Windy Boy or Jonathan as we know him for sponsoring the bill. Thank you.